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A team-teaching experiment in high school English and observations in the problems encountered by planners were presented. Also promotion of more effective ability grouping and the improvement and economizing of instruction were explored.

The classes in the study were a junior and a senior English class. Each had 80 students; and each was composed of one class of advanced students and two classes of average students. Out of necessity, 20 low-ability students were placed in the senior group. Personnel included ε consultant and a team leader from the State university, two high school teachers, a clerk, and three practice teachers.

Four major plans were devised for trial. Classroom rotation enabled each teacher to know each student. Papers were distributed randomly to teachers for grading; discussion among teachers enabled the grading system to be standardized. Unit rotation enabled utilization of staff potential; each teacher concentrated on one area of interest and taught the same material to three different one-hour classes. In the laboratory rotation plan, each class was divided into a group of 50 who received enrichment material and three groups of ten composed of poorer writers who received remedial work. One senior seminar was for the most advanced students. Teachers operated on a schedule which allowed time for analytical observation and for supervision of practice teachers. The lead-lecture plan used large group lectures which served as a springboard for small discussion groups arranged according to ability.

The lead-lecture plan was considered the best and the laboratory plan second. Team teaching was proved to be an instrument which provides for suitable levels of teaching within a speciality.

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Designs for Team Teaching in English

Martin Stevens and William R. Elkins

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This article, based on an experiment in Louisville, Kentucky, sheds much light on the problems and possibilities in team teaching. Dr. Stevens is an associate professor of English at the University of Louisville. Mr. Elkins, formerly in charge of the project described here, is now an instructor in English at the Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma.

THIS article is meant to describe a team-teaching experiment in high school English and, in so doing, to offer some observations on the practical problems that planners of such projects are apt to encounter. It is further meant to explore two basic objectives which team teaching projects generally set out to achieve: (1) the promotion of more effective ability grouping, and (2) the improvement and economizing of instruction.

The team teaching experiment in question is one which is currently in its second year of operation at Louisville Male High School (which is no longer a boys' school as its name might imply). In its first year of operation, the project was confined to two class periods, constituting two-fifths of the total load for the participating full-time teachers. The first of the two classes was composed of approximately eighty seniors, and the second of eighty juniors. As such, each of the team-teaching classes, therefore, constituted the equivalent of three conventional classes (in Louisville schools, class size varies from 25 to 35 students). Since ability grouping is standard practice in Louisville schools, we inititated the project by requesting for each group the equivalent of one class of advanced students and two classes of what the Louisville schools call "general - academic," which means wide-ranging average. It was our intent originally not to include any student in the "basic," or lowest, classification. However, exigencies of schedule made it necessary for us to accept twenty such students in the senior class.

It should be noted that the Louisville project from its inception was a unique one because it drew its staff partly from the University of Louisville and partly from the Louisville public schools. Two members of the team served on split appointment, with half of their time devoted to the teaching of university classes and half to the directing, planning, and teaching in the team project. Of these, one is an associate professor of English, who served primarily as consultant though he also participated in the teaching of the high school classes. The other is an experienced high school English teacher, who, besides having been assigned two freshman composition classes at the University, also functioned as "team leader" and master teacher in the project. Other personnel in the project were two full-time high school teachers, of whom one was in her first year and the other a veteran of thirty-eight years service. There was also a two-thirds time clerk (called a "teacher aide" in the jargon of the profession). In addition, each semester three practice teachers were assigned to the project by the University. Except for the two members who came to be known as "university related," teachers were scheduled for

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three conventional classes in the morning in addition to the two "team" classes in the afternoon. One period, daily, was set aside for planning.

So much for the organization of the Louisville project. It is significant that this team-teaching venture functioned within a relatively conventional setting. Louisville Male High School was not equipped physically for team teaching. In fact, for most of the school year, we taught our larger groups in a chemistry lab which, even at maximum use of space, could not accommodate all of our students at once. When we scheduled sessions for the entire group of eighty students, we used the library or the cafeteria, neither of which was an ideal classroom, but both of which did take care of our basic needs. At the last, we finally did have an adequate room for the entire group. It was designed to our specifications which called quite simply for the removal of a wall between two of our classrooms and its replacement by soundproof, panelled folding doors. At minimum expense, the School Board also authorized, early in the school year, the construction of a partitioned office and consultation room which was built into an existing alcove in the building.

Besides the conventional setting, we should also note the limited budget on which the project functioned. Considering *minimal* needs for team teaching—and that would exclude the connection of the project with the University—the program was uncomplicated and inexpensive. The only additional items absolutely needed for the running of the program were the salary for the part-time clerk (which amounted to $1600), the cost of increments paid for summer planning (which amounted to $1400), and the construction of the office-consultation room partition. In all, therefore, the basic cost for the team-teaching project was kept well under $5000, and of that sum, a large part is, of course, a capital improvement to the school building itself. We have excluded here any reference to the University connection because that part of the program had less to do with initiating the *method* than with enriching the *content* of the project.

Our experience, then, would serve to show that, given three interested teachers, three practice teachers, and one part-time clerical secretary, a team-teaching project can be initiated even in a traditionally designed school building. Our experience, further, served to show that it is not so much budget or physical problems which stand in the way of experimentation with team teaching but rather the difficulty of drawing up workable plans.

The first requirement for the proper organization of a team-teaching project is adequate planning time, both before school gets under way and during the course of the school year. We had a total of fourteen full days of conferences before school opened and then a regular class period set aside each day for planning. During these conference times, and in preparation for them, we became familiar with the growing journal literature on team teaching. Our response to this literature was dismay. Thumbing through a seven-page bibliography on team teaching which was distributed at the "Instructional Leadership Conference" (dedicated to team teaching) at Ohio University, we observed that most journal articles speculated and theorized loftily, but only very few gave practical tips. In the field of English, as a matter of fact, we found only one really helpful article in which a plan was actually set forth.[1] We have since gratefully made use of that plan. Even more important, it served as a base that generated other plans. And it is this generating of plans which is really the main task that prospective team teachers have to encounter.

[1] See V. H. Smith, "Team Teaching Has Advantages," *English Journal*, XLIX (April 1960), pp. 242-4 f.

We shall proceed now to describe the major plans which we devised.

Classroom Rotation

The first plan we evolved was a simple *classroom rotation.* At the start of school, we were assigned three conventional classrooms each accommodating from 25 to 30 students. Since team teaching was as new to the school administration as it was to the staff, no attempt had been made to consolidate roll books and to assign the students to the entire team-teaching staff. In order, therefore, to discourage students from regarding their classroom, with its officially assigned teacher, as a home base, we immediately established a single roll book and a teacher rotation system. It worked simply and effectively. At the beginning of each week, the students moved from one classroom to another—all according to an assignment schedule which was given to them the previous Friday. The work, of course, was co-ordinated so that the three classroom teachers were teaching the same material. Compositions were always graded by the team—that is to say, they were assigned on the same subject, at the same time; and after they were turned in, they were divided at random into three groups for grading. It was therefore quite possible for a student to have his paper graded by a teacher who had not instructed him at the time when the paper was assigned. This simple rotation plan remained in operation for the first four weeks. During that time, also, the entire group was scheduled for occasional meetings in the cafeteria. It was at these meetings that some instructional material was introduced and that tests were administered. For the latter purpose, we often made use of our teacher aide as proctor, thus releasing the staff for paper grading and additional planning. The rotation plan had three distinct advantages as a starter: (1) it imbedded in the minds of the students the notion that they were part of a *team*-teaching project; (2) it gave the participating teachers an opportunity to get to know personally all the students assigned to the project; and (3) it provided the opportunity for the discussion and co-ordination of standards in the grading of student writing.

Unit Rotation

Having completed our first month of team teaching, we felt ready to initiate a plan which would take greater advantage of the staff's potential. It was at this point that we made use of the *unit rotation* plan which, in its main essentials, was suggested to us by V. H. Smith, in the article already mentioned. The unit rotation system which we adopted functioned for a two-week period, hence a total of ten class hours. During this time, the three teachers each chose one type of literature to introduce: the short story, the poem, or the play. The teachers thus concentrated on one area of interest and prepared for three class hours of instruction which they would present to three different groups of students. The plan called for a rotation of students after three days of instruction, so that at the conclusion of nine days they would each have attended all three introductory units. On the tenth day, they were given a test over the entire material covered by the team. This test was graded by the team—each teacher reading that part which covered the material he taught. The merits of the *unit rotation* plan were twofold: first, it reduced preparation time for the participating teachers, who, in the traditional classroom, would have had to prepare for nine class sessions instead of three; and, second, it exposed the students to three points of view on literature instead of one.

With the completion of the ten-day *unit rotation* plan, we also concluded the first grading period, which, in the Louis-

ville schools, covers six weeks of instruction. As already pointed out, our team teaching extended even into the assignment and evaluation of compositions. In fact, it was particularly in the assignment of the book review—one of which we required for each grading period—that we realized one of the special advantages of team teaching. Normally, the beleaguered high school English teacher simply cannot know all the books that comprise his approved reading list. If he is conscientious, he will probably reduce that list to books which he has read and which he remembers well enough to do a thorough job of evaluating his papers. In team teaching, the resources of all participating personnel can be employed, and as a result, students can be offered relatively extensive lists of books from which to make their choices. When our team was in full operation, we were able to draw on seven teachers (this number includes the practice teachers), each of whom submitted five book titles together with short descriptive statements, which were then compiled into an annotated reading list. Students were told that they were to choose one book for very careful critical reading, and they were also warned that their reviews would be read by someone who was wholly familiar with the book. When the papers were turned in, the sorting out was consequently done by book title. It happened, of course, that some teachers had a few more papers to read than others, but over the six grading periods, the work very nearly evened itself out. The important advantage of this system consisted of the care with which the books were read and their reviews written. As a result of team teaching, the book review thus became something more significant than the usual ancillary assignment done quite literally at the eleventh hour and inspired by the laudatory words on the flyleaf.

The end of the first grading period found us at an important juncture. It was at this time that we added the three practice teachers to our staff. Until then, they had attended the customary pedagogical instruction that precedes actual apprenticeship. With the student teachers now available we were able to venture into some more complicated teaching designs. At this point we had to consider two important needs: that of the students and that of the practice teachers. The students, though already exposed to various new classroom experiences which were designed to improve and economize instruction, had not yet profited from the potential that team teaching offers in ability grouping. It must be borne in mind that thus far we had not even separated students. Much less had we attempted any more specific grouping by ability or achievement. The practice teachers, of course, had to be eased into teaching under optimum conditions. They needed to observe experienced teachers and to receive proper guidance in their own classroom performance.

Laboratory Rotation

To satisfy these two needs, we evolved what we have come to call the *laboratory-rotation* plan. This plan, at first sight, seems somewhat complicated, but in actuality it functioned simply and conveniently within the limited physical facilities at our avail. The diagram on page 174 describes the basic features of the plan.

Several facts should be noted. First, the eighty students were divided into four groups, the largest of which consisted of fifty students, and the other three of approximately ten each. We placed the poorest writers in the small groups, so that, in effect, the three groups of ten students each were remedial classes. Second, we planned a four-week minimal unit of instruction which embraced material that we required all students to know. This minimal unit was to be composed of assignments in literature, compo-

WEEK	*LARGE GROUP ca. 50 students*	*SMALL GROUP I ca. 10 students*	*SMALL GROUP II ca. 10 students*	*SMALL GROUP III ca. 10 students*
1	MINIMAL UNIT	REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASS	MINIMAL UNIT	MINIMAL UNIT
2				
3		MINIMAL UNIT	REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASS	
4				
5	ENRICHMENT		MINIMAL UNIT	REMEDIAL ENGLISH CLASS
6				

sition, and language. The remaining two weeks of the six-week grading term offered specialized instruction to suit the needs of the various sections. The Large Group of fifty thus had two weeks of what we considered some sort of enrichment in the curriculum. Enrichment could consist of advanced composition, the intensive reading of literature in translation, the study of an introductory book in linguistics (like Laird's *Miracle of Language*, which, in fact, we did use), an intensive comparative study of a given day's issue of two mass-circulating metropolitan newspapers (we used *The Chicago Tribune* and The Louisville *Courier-Journal*), the critical reading and discussion of a mass magazine like the *Atlantic*, exercises in extemporaneous and impromptu speaking, and field trips to theaters, libraries, and newspaper plants. The Small Groups, in contrast, spent their "extra" two weeks in a remedial English class. Here they were given instruction in the essentials of style, later with the aid of such texts as *English 2600* (which, fortunately, our book budget could afford to provide for the project).

For the operation of this plan, we had a total of seven teachers (including the consultant) upon whom to call. Of these, a full-time teacher—an experienced one who liked teaching the traditional rule-book grammar—taught all of the remedial English classes. The other two full-time teachers and the consultant alternated according to interest and time in the teaching of the Large Group of fifty. The practice teachers were each responsible for the minimal-unit presentation in one of the Small Groups of ten.

Perhaps another look at the diagram is now desirable. Glancing at the first column vertically, we notice that the minimal unit was taught for the first four weeks and the enrichment unit came in the last two weeks. The small groups had a similar relative distribution of the work load, the minimal unit comprising four weeks and the remedial English class two weeks. However, for the small groups the schedule was quite apparently staggered. To explain this fact, we need to bear in mind that one teacher taught the remedial English class to each Small Group in two-week segments. Viewed horizontally, the diagram shows that while the Large Group met for the first two weeks, the remedial English teacher taught Small Group #1, and Small Groups #2 and #3 met concurrently, each under the tutelage of a practice teacher. Four members of the staff,

therefore, were teaching during the two-week segments. Not assigned to teaching during each of these segments were one full-time teacher and one of the practice teachers (also, in some instances, the consultant). We, thus, had one teacher and the consultant available for observation in the small groups taught by the practice teachers. Meanwhile, the one practice teacher not assigned to a group for the two-week segment was required to observe the instruction carried on in the Large Group (which, in most instances, covered the same material that she would cover with her group of ten students in the next two weeks).

The *laboratory-rotation* plan has some interesting implications. First of all, it can be instituted in any school building without making use of large rooms unsuited for instruction like the auditorium or the cafeteria. The Small Groups are small enough to be put into whatever nook the school has available. We settled at times even for two out-of-the-way dressing rooms directly adjacent to the main stage of the auditorium. Secondly, the plan gives personal attention to students who rarely profit from small group instruction—the weaker students. This personal attention was, of course, compensated for in the Large Group where the better students were given enriched instruction by experienced teachers. In the third place, the plan provided for a rich in-service training potential. Practice teachers as well as experienced teachers learned from other teachers. Observation was always going on. As often as possible, we gave practice teachers a chance to observe the introduction of material that they themselves had to present. Moreover, the practice teachers were eased into confronting a class by having to face only ten students instead of the customary thirty. As a result, too, there were no discipline problems. Finally, the teacher least prone to experimentation and, for that matter to the open-door policy of team teaching, was given his own precinct—that of the Remedial Laboratory. We hasten to add here that our experience with team teaching bore out what others have said about it: not all teachers are equally suited to the method. For those who like complete independence, the traditional classroom may yet be the best situation. But for those who are willing to experiment, yet who wish to retain some of the autonomy of the self-contained class, the experience of our remedial plan may be advantageous. It was in the latter classification that the teacher of our remedial sections would fit.

The *laboratory-rotation* plan was by far the most radical of the three we had thus far tried; it was also the most successful. This is the reason we returned to it several times, though with slight modifications. Before describing one of these modifications, however, we need to draw attention to a problem that team teaching is likely to induce. Students can feel uprooted. They have no real home plot, and their relationship with teachers can become too impersonal. We tried rather unsuccessfully to overcome this problem. It was impossible for us to set up personal conferences with each student. Both the tight scheduling of the students and our own need for planning time prevented such sessions. We tried for a while a system which would assign each student to an advisor, as is the case in college. But this system, too, was bound to fail inasmuch as no opportunity was presented for the students to meet their advisors on a regular basis. A solution to the problem may be in the making now that the Louisville project is going into its second year of operation. Its present leader initiated the system of putting all the participating seniors into home rooms assigned to members of the English team. These home-room teachers thus have, in effect, the time and place to function as advisors. In the second year, too, planning time is somewhat

reduced, and so a part of the schedule opens up for individual conferences.

One of the slight modifications of the *laboratory-rotation* plan was the initiation of a *seminar* for the ten or twelve very best students. This seminar was conducted as an outgrowth of the large group, and the students involved were removed from the large groups at irregular times. On such occasions, one of the senior teachers would dispense with observing in a Small Group (later in the project as student teachers gained more confidence, we eased up on observation). Normally, he would prepare an assignment and meet the seminar again when the assignment was completed. These seminars ranged in activity from special work done with word etymologies to the writing of sonnets and the assignment of additional readings in literature. Quite obviously, the seminar method gave more personal instruction to the very best students, and it was frankly intended to prepare them for honors work which they might well encounter in college. It is a noteworthy fact that the ability grouping achieved within the project did not wholly coincide with the school system's classification of students. As a matter of fact, there were several instances in which students labelled "advanced" on their records were placed in a remedial class and, conversely, those labelled "general academic" were put into the seminar. Our ability grouping resulted from a more specific examination of the students' competence in the language arts. Team teaching, therefore, can also be a most useful instrument for providing suitable levels of instruction within fields of specialty.

Lead Lectures

The last major plan we devised we came to identify as the *lead-lecture* plan. In its basic essentials, this plan is perhaps the one most frequently identified with team teaching. When we instituted the *lead-lecture* system, we finally had a classroom large enough to accommodate all eighty students. Lead lectures were presented once each week, preferably on Monday, by one of the senior teachers. These lectures were not only attended by all students but by the entire teaching staff as well. They were carefully organized and packed with information, and they were designed to serve as a springboard for discussion to ensue in six small groups each consisting of about thirteen students for the rest of the week. The sections of thirteen were formed as a result of ability grouping. In effect, then, the *lead-lecture* system combined all the best elements of the preceding plans. It provided for teacher training (though not for observation by senior teachers); it led to the presentation of carefully prepared lectures; it co-ordinated the instructional program; and it was geared to students at various levels of attainment. However, we must also add that the *lead-lecture* system was planned in the proper environment for team teaching. It was only made possible when we had proper accommodations. As such, it may not be a useful plan for teachers venturing into a team operation in the school building which has only the conventional type classroom.

Our experience in the Louisville Male High School project was only the start of what promises to be a more elaborate team-teaching plan in the future. In designing the organization of the project we are sure that we missed opportunities for employing the combined skills of our team. But the plans that we did evolve seemed useful to us, and, it is our hope, that they may be useful to others too. One point bears repetition: team teaching as a method *can* work with minimum facilities. It *can* work in a conventional setting with a small operating budget. It *can* work—but, as Pope would say, "not without a plan."